

REMARKS

Amendments to the Claims

Claim 1 has been amended by incorporating the subject matter of claim 12. Claims 12 and 21-22 have been cancelled. Support for the amendment to claim 1 is found in original claim 12. Claim 13 has been amended to correct the dependency thereof.

Response to Examiner's Rejection of Claims 1-11, 18-21, 22-24 and 67

The Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's allowance of claims 25-31, 33-36, 38-52, 54-66 and 68-70. Additionally, the Applicants appreciate the Examiner's identification of allowable subject matter in objected to claims 12-16.

Therefore, in order to advance the pending claims to allowance, the Applicants have incorporated the subject matter of pending claim 12 into claim 1. In view of this amendment, the Applicants believe that claim 1 is now in allowable condition. Accordingly, dependent claims 2-11, 13-16, 18-20, 23-24 and 67, which depend from claim 1, are also in allowable condition.

In order to preserve Applicants' rights to further amend the claims, if necessary, the Applicants request withdrawal of the finality of the June 29, 2006 rejection. In the June 29th Official Action, the Examiner indicated that Applicants' earlier arguments were moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. However, the new rejection was not necessitated by the prior amendments to the claims. Therefore, the issuance of a final rejection was premature.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments to the claims, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the indicated rejections.

A formal Notice of Allowance of pending claims 1-11, 13-16, 18-20, 23-31, 33-36, 38-52, and 54-70 is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date

William D. Hall
Registration No. 35,535
McAFEE & TAFT
Tenth Floor, Two Leadership Square
211 North Robinson
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73102
Telephone: (405)-552-2380
FAX No. (405) 228-7343
E-mail: bill.hall@mcafeetaft.com

Attorney for Applicants